

based on characteristics of projects and/or corridors to be served. If a proposed project can meet the established standards, FTA may assign an automatic rating on one or more of the local financial commitment criteria outlined in this section.

(f) As a candidate project proceeds through engineering, a greater level of local financial commitment will be expected.

(g) FTA may amend the measures for these local financial commitment criteria. Any such amendment will be included in policy guidance and subject to a public comment process.

(h) For each proposed project, ratings for paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section will be reported in terms of descriptive indicators, as follows: "high," "medium-high," "medium," "medium-low," or "low." For paragraph (a) of this section, the percentage of New Starts funding sought from 49 U.S.C. 5309 will be rated and used to develop the summary local financial commitment rating, but only if it improves the rating and not if it worsens the rating.

(i) The ratings for each measure described in this section will be combined into a summary local financial commitment rating of "high," "medium-high," "medium," "medium-low," or "low." The process by which the summary local financial commitment rating will be developed, including the assigned weights to each of the measures, will be described in policy guidance.

§611.207 Overall New Starts project ratings.

(a) [Reserved]

(b) FTA will assign overall project ratings to each proposed project of "high," "medium-high," "medium," "medium-low," or "low" as required by 49 U.S.C. 5309(g)(2)(A).

(1) These ratings will indicate the overall merit of a proposed New Starts project at the time of evaluation.

(2) Ratings for individual projects will be developed upon entry into engineering and prior to an FFGA. Additionally, ratings may be updated while a project is in engineering if the project scope and cost have changed materially since the most recent rating was assigned.

(c) These ratings will be used to:

(1) Approve or deny advancement of a proposed project into engineering ;

(2) Approve or deny projects for ESWAs and FFGAs; and

(3) Support annual funding recommendations to Congress in the *Annual Report on Funding Recommendations* required by 49 U.S.C. 5309(o)(1).

(d) [Reserved]

§611.209 [Reserved]

§611.211 New Starts Before and After study.

(a) During engineering, project sponsors shall submit to FTA a plan for collection and analysis of information to identify the characteristics, costs, and impacts of the New Starts project and the accuracy of the forecasts prepared during development of the project.

(1) The Before and After study plan shall consider:

(i) Characteristics including the physical scope of the project, the service provided by the project, any other changes in service provided by the transit system, and the schedule of transit fares;

(ii) Costs including the capital costs of the project and the operating and maintenance costs of the transit system in appropriate detail; and

(iii) Impacts including changes in transit service quality, ridership, and fare levels.

(2) The plan shall provide for:

(i) Documentation and preservation of the predicted scope, service levels, capital costs, operating costs, and ridership of the project;

(ii) Collection of "before" data on the transit service levels and ridership patterns of the current transit system including origins and destinations, access modes, trip purposes, and rider characteristics;

(iii) Documentation of the actual capital costs of the as-built project;

(iv) Collection of "after" data two years after opening of the project, including the analogous information on transit service levels and ridership patterns, plus information on operating costs of the transit system in appropriate detail;

(v) Analysis of the costs and impacts of the project; and